

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08  
FRB-03 INR-10 NSAE-00 SP-02 STR-07 TRSE-00 LAB-04  
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FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7383  
INFO ALL EC CAPITALS  
AMCONSUL STRASBOURG

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USEEC

E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: EEC, EP, PEPR, FR, PINT  
SUBJ: FRENCH SOCIALIST FRANCOIS MITTERAND SPEAKS  
TO PRESS DURING JUNE SESSION OF EUROPEAN  
PARLIAMENT

1. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED. SUMMARY: WHILE IN STRASBOURG  
JUNE 14 TO ATTEND A DINNER COMMEMORATING THE 25TH  
ANNIVERSARY OF THE FORMATION OF THE SOCIALIST GROUP OF  
THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT (EP), FRENCH SOCIALIST FRANCOIS  
MITTERAND HELD A PRESS CONFERENCE AT THE PALAIS DE  
L'EUROPE DURING WHICH HE COMMENTED ON THE EUROPEAN  
SOCIALISTS' POSITION ON THE FORTHCOMING DIRECT ELECTIONS  
TO THE EP AND ON THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT'S RESCUE OPERATION  
IN ZAIRE. END SUMMARY.

2. CONTRARY TO EXPECTATIONS AND ADVANCE PRESS SPECULA-  
TION, MITTERAND FAILED DURING HIS PRESS CONFERENCE TO  
ANNOUNCE HIS CANDIDACY FOR THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT.  
INSTEAD, HE CONFINED HIMSELF TO SAYING THAT IT IS UP  
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TO THE FRENCH SOCIALIST PARTY TO NAME ITS CANDIDATES  
FOR THE EP ELECTIONS AND THAT CONSEQUENTLY HE DID NOT  
KNOW WHETHER HE WILL GET THE NOMINATION.

3. DURING SUBSEQUENT QUESTIONING, MITTERAND SAID EUROPEAN  
SOCIALISTS ARE STRONGLY BEHIND A UNITED EUROPE AND THAT  
THE FRENCH SOCIALISTS PLAN TO PARTICIPATE FULLY IN

EUROPEAN CONSTRUCTION AND THE FORTHCOMING EP ELECTIONS. HE FURTHER NOTED THAT THE FRENCH SOCIALISTS SUPPORT THE CREATION OF A COMMON EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND MONETARY POLICY AS A NECESSARY MEANS OF RESTORING MONETARY STABILITY. ON EC ENLARGEMENT, MITTERAND UNRESERVEDLY SUPPORTED GREECE'S ACCESSION INTO THE COMMUNITY AND EMPHASIZED THAT PORTUGAL'S ENTRY IS ALSO POLITICALLY IMPORTANT. REGARDING SPAIN, MITTERAND ACKNOWLEDGED THAT ACCESSION IS POLITICALLY DESIRABLE, BUT FELT THAT A TEN-YEAR TRANSITION PERIOD IS NECESSARY GIVEN THE SPECIAL PROBLEMS SPAIN PRESENTS THE COMMUNITY. WHEN ASKED ABOUT THE SOCIALISTS' STAND ON A COMMON COMMUNITY INDUSTRIAL POLICY, MITTERAND WAS VAGUE, CLAIMING THAT THE SOCIALISTS HAVE NOT YET DEVELOPED A POSITION.

4. MUCH OF MITTERAND'S PRESS CONFERENCE FOCUSED ON HIS CRITICISM OF THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT'S HANDLING OF THE RESCUE OPERATION IN ZAIRE. WHILE SUPPORTING THE OPERATION AS BEING NECESSARY FROM THE HUMANITARIAN POINT OF VIEW, HE WAS CRITICAL OF PRESIDENT GISCARD'S FAILURE TO INFORM THE FRENCH OPPOSITION PRIOR TO CARRYING OUT THE MISSION. MOREOVER, HE CASTIGATED THE GOVERNMENT FOR PUBLICLY ANNOUNCING THE OPERATION 48 HOURS IN ADVANCE, NOTING THAT SUCH ACTION MAY HAVE UNNECESSARILY ENDANGERED THE LIVES OF EXPATRIATES LIVING IN KOLWEZI. FINALLY, HE URGED THAT FRANCE BE CAREFUL IN ITS DEALINGS WITH AFRICAN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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COUNTRIES AND NOT INDULGE IN MILITARY INTERVENTIONS ON THAT CONTINENT, WHICH HE OPPOSED. END UNCLASSIFIED

5. BEGIN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE. FROM THE EC STANDPOINT, MITTERAND'S PRESS CONFERENCE WAS UNINSPIRING AND SOMEWHAT DISAPPOINTING. HE SEEMED ILL-PREPARED TO FIELD QUESTIONS RELATING TO COMMUNITY POLICIES AND EITHER UNINFORMED OR UNCOMMUNICATIVE OF HIS OWN PARTY'S POSITION ON A NUMBER OF EC-RELATED ISSUES. HIS CONCENTRATION ON FRANCE'S ROLE IN AFRICA LED MANY TO BELIEVE HE WAS MORE INTENT ON FOCUSING ON FRENCH POLITICS THAN ON EC MATTERS, BUT THE VAGUENESS WITH WHICH HE APPROACHED EC ISSUES, ADDED TO THE TOPICALITY OF ZAIRE, MAY HAVE PROMPTED JOURNALIST QUESTIONING TO BE DIRECTED TOWARD FRENCH POLITICS. PERHAPS AFTER THE SOCIALIST MEETING IN BRUSSELS JUNE 23-24 AT WHICH DIRECT ELECTIONS TO THE EP WILL BE THE MAIN TOPIC, HIS IDEAS ON THE COMMUNITY WILL BECOME MORE CRYSTALIZED, PARTICULARLY IF HE DECIDES TO BECOME A SERIOUS CANDIDATE FOR THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT. END LIMITED OFFICIAL USE. MORRIS

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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 20 jun 1978  
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**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
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